

**\* Monthly Meeting – Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August\***

Please join us at our next **Monthly Members’ meeting**.

It will start at **2pm** on **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August** at **THE SHEPPEY HALL, QUEENBOROUGH**

**Summer Party - Picnic in the Hall**

**AUGUST EACH YEAR IS TIME FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE BIT DIFFERENT!**

**Instead of our usual Picnic in the Park we have moved our event indoors to avoid being rained off!**

Come and join your fellow members for a fun filled sociable afternoon with games and quizzes. We have extended the afternoon until 5pm so we will have plenty of time to enjoy ourselves. Bring along your favourite picnic food and drink, a summer hat and table decorations if you wish.

**There will be prizes for the best decorated table and the best summer hat**

- ◆ We will have long tables set out in a street party fashion.
- ◆ Members are invited to decorate their tables and to organise groups together to share their food if they wish. If you wish to reserve tables in advance so your group can be seated together, please let us know.
- ◆ There will be plenty of room for those who don’t want to book/decorate a table and just wish to turn up on the day as usual.
- ◆ We expect to be able to provide plenty of games to play for example, Quoits, Giant Jenga, Molky, Ladder Golf
- ◆ We will have our usual quiz courtesy of Val Spoor
- ◆ Ken will be holding a blind wine tasting event
- ◆ Tea and coffee will be available as usual

**\*Save the date for next month: Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September\***

***The Secret History of Drug Smuggling - Frank Hurst***

**COMING UP...**

<b>David’s Slice of Life</b>	Page 2	This month, David ponders the cost of the Fish & Chips supper.
<b>Interest Groups &amp; Activities</b>	Page 3	Information about our groups
<b>u3a Excursions</b>		Sign up for our next excursion
<b>Kent u3a Network</b>	Page 4	Find out more about our Kent Network
<b>National u3a Online Learning Events</b>	Page 5	There’s a wide range of national online talks, included in your membership for FREE!
<b>u3a National Programmes</b>		
<b>u3a Radio Podcast</b>	Page 6	August’s edition of the radio podcast is out.
<b>u3aFriends Extra</b>		Join the “u3a Friends” to access discounts on products and services. Sign up for the newsletter to for all the up-to-date national u3a information.
<b>u3a Friends Newsletter</b>		
<b>A Little Light entertainment</b>	Page 6	A little humour
<b>Information &amp; Contact details</b>	Page 7	Let us know if you want to join our members only Facebook Group and/or u3a General WhatsApp Group?

## David's Slice of Life

Yes, folks, it's the silly season, the time of the year when traditionally there is little real news around (if only that were true his year) and most newspapers are full of inconsequential nonsense.



But, silly season, or not, I'm going to write about fish and chips.

Imagine this scenario: "Cod and chips twice, please."

"Certainly, sir. That'll be £50."

OK, I'm deliberately exaggerating to make a point - but it's a serious point.

Cod and chips twice will now set you back around £25 and how long before that £50 figure seems not quite so daft. It's only a couple of years since that same double order cost around £15.

Earlier this month, I was reading a report which said that fish and chip shops are taking a real battering, if you'll excuse the pun. We all know that the price of just about everything is rising, but chippies are being hit on all sides by cost increases, so much so that one forecast predicts that half of all UK fish and chip shops could be forced to close in a year or two.

A meal once considered a cheap takeaway option is now anything but cheap. The rate of price rises for fish and chips seems disproportionately high compared to other takeaway meals.

We have a fish and chip shop just a few hundred yards from where we live. We have never been big fish and chip eaters but occasionally they made a nice treat. But the moderate sized portions of cod and chips we previously ordered have more than doubled in price in just a couple of years. And therein lies the looming crunch for fish and chip shops.

Affordability is becoming a real issue for many customers.

I'm not suggesting that chippies are profiteering. The wholesale price of fish has gone through the roof, along with all the other costs associated with running a fish and chip shop - from energy and cooking oil, to paper products and potatoes. Add changing customer habits into the mix and the future for the nation's chippies looks increasingly gloomy.

In the same week I read that Britain's pubs are facing a similar crisis, hit by a triple whammy of energy prices, inflation and a 35 per cent reduction in business rate discounts. Customer habits are also changing, with more people buying cheaper supermarket booze. More than 600 pubs have closed over the last 18 months and the rate of shutdowns is accelerating.

Please don't get the idea that I'm obsessed with fish and chips, pubs and beer. What I'm trying to do is to illustrate how, in two cases, a staple of the British way of life is in serious, possibly terminal, decline.

You could also add newspapers to this depressing list. Many of these, including local papers, are also on borrowed time.

I wouldn't like to predict what the situation will be in 10 years' time. All I know for certain is that we shall miss all of them when they're gone, but by then it will be far too late to turn the clock back.

## INTEREST GROUPS & ACTIVITIES

### U3A EXCURSIONS

#### LONDON LIGHTS WITH FISH & CHIPS

Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December

Excursion group organisers, Julie & Sue, are hoping to run an excursion, through NK Holidays, to London Christmas Lights, with a Fish and Chip Supper, included in the price, on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December. The cost is £45 per head, subject to change depending on numbers.

This will be exclusive to members of the Isle of Sheppey u3a and will pick up at Abbey Hotel and Sheerness East Working Men's Club, **only**. Julie will ask for permission for members to park there if necessary. We will leave the island at approximately 1pm and expect to get back at approximately 10pm.

There will be forms available at the meeting on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> August, for you to express an interest, if you are unable to attend the meeting please feel free to let us know by email and we can add you to the interest list. If we receive sufficient interest a non-refundable deposit of £10 will be required by the date of the September meeting, and the final balance to be paid in October.

#### MEDWAY RIVER CRUISE – 1<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER

At the last u3a meeting Julie & Sue asked for names of members who might be interested in this excursion, unfortunately we did not get enough names to make it possible to book, so this will not be going ahead.

We tried this also in June, but were unable to co-ordinate the minibuses, there was a good level of interest then, so possibly this will be an option to try again next summer.

### SOCIAL HISTORY GROUP

#### THE HISTORY OF THE LIFEBOATS

The Royal National Lifeboat Institution has celebrated 201 years of saving lives at sea, through peace and war, and without favour to friend or foe or question of nationality or intentions. People are in danger upon the sea and lives are at risk; these have always been the only criteria to be considered when launching the lifeboat.

When I was a lad in Ramsgate, I often watched in envious admiration as the lifeboat crews dashed to the harbour in response to the maroons, to launch the lifeboat within fifteen minutes of the callout. They were my heroes! It is now far more technical, but the selfless dedication of the crews is unchanged, as is my admiration for them.

The Isle of Sheppey u3a Social History Group members devoted their August meeting to discussing the results of their research into the history of this remarkable charity and organisation, which continues to engender strong emotional support throughout the nation after two centuries. The discussion covered the issues of the RNLI's maintained total independence from Government and any other external power, its charitable status, how it developed from ordinary oared, open lifeboats, to self-righting boats, through to motor-powered lifeboats, and finally to the high-powered, specially designed and constructed lifeboats that currently protect our coasts. The heroic service of the RNLI through two world wars was also given deserved coverage. We all left the meeting with a far greater knowledge and understanding of the benefit and value to the nation of the RNLI.

Next month's meeting, at **2pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**, at the Sea Cadets Unit at Barton Point, Sheerness, will be discussing "**Jobs that no longer exist**". You would all be welcome to join us in a fascinating look back into our social history and a tantalising trip down memory lane.

**Friday 17<sup>th</sup> October Games & Entertainment Throughout History**



**COMMUNITY EVENTS**



**WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN TO PLAY BRIDGE?**

Medway Towns Bridge Club have contacted us in case any of our members would be interested in learning to play Bridge. They have Bridge lessons for beginners starting in September. It's a four-day fast track course, takes place in Bredhurst and costs £75.

NB This is an independent club based in Medway and is not part of the u3a.

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSLETTER**

Thank you to all those who have provided contributions this month from David Jones for his David's Slice of Life, David Goodin's contribution from the Social History group and Julie Alderman for our excursion information. Please let us know if you have any other contributions, including from Interest Groups or for local community events. Send them to [isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com). Deadline for inclusion in September newsletter is Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September.

**MONTHLY MEETING DATES 2025**

Meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of each month (except in December) at 2pm until 4pm, at The Sheppey Hall in Queenborough. Refreshments are included Doors open 1.40pm.

<b>2025</b>	<b>2026</b>
<b>25<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>22<sup>nd</sup> January</b>
<b>23<sup>rd</sup> October</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> February</b>
<b>27<sup>th</sup> November</b>	<b>26<sup>th</sup> March</b>
<b>11<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Meeting</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> April</b>

**KENT u3a NETWORK**

The Kent u3a Network comprises of the 32 u3as across the Kent region. Representatives from each u3a meet periodically to share ideas, events, speakers and training session, to discuss issues and to support each other. Our committee members attend and keep in touch with the Kent u3a Network which has been an invaluable help in setting up and maintaining our u3a over the past few years.

You can find more information on their website: [Kent u3a Network Website](#)  
 As a member of Isle of Sheppey u3a you can also join their private discussion Facebook group: [Kent u3a Network Facebook Group](#)

## NATIONAL u3a

*Have you looked on the National u3a website? There's so much u3a members across the country are getting involved with*

**ONLINE LEARNING EVENTS**

There are numerous and wide-ranging learning events and short courses (usually free online using zoom),  
**Coming up soon in August/September/October:** [u3a online events](#)

- Vengeance or Vision? Artemisia Gentileschi and the Art of Survival
- Climate Change and Artificial Intelligence
- Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Seven
- Flight Inspirations Aviation Meeting: September
- Travelling with a meaning and purpose, the HX Expeditions Way
- Small Modular Nuclear Reactors
- Riner Marie Rilke: The Journey Within
- The Gothic II: Tracing the Genre from Medieval Architecture to the Goths
- Cryptic Crosswords in Context
- Railway History at the National Archive
- Upgrade your Urban Driving with IAM Roadsmart
- The Life and Music of Ian Gillian – Deep Purple
- Exploring World Faiths: Do we Live in a Humanitarian World?
- Data Sharing: What do u3a members think about sharing their personal data
- Age Without Limits: Celebrate Ageing
- Eating Well for Health and Vitality in Later Life
- What the future changes in landlines will mean for you
- What do official statistics reveal about positive aging
- Secrets of the Human Brain: Talk Eight
- My Gardening life: Decades on the plot, screen and airwaves
- AI News September: Driving the Future – AI in Transportation
- Introduction to Cryptic Crosswords
- Still got it! Positive Ageing Photography
- Sex DNA and the chemistry in microscopic animals: The Strange tale of rotifers
- Ice Age to Iron Age – Britain in Prehistory
- The Ultimate Guide to Editing Your Creative Writing
- Flight Inspiration Aviation Meeting: October
- Preparing for an AI World
- Wearable Technology and Healthy Ageing
- Meditation & Mindfulness continuation sessions
- Laughter Yoga with Merrie Maggie
- Laughter Yoga with Judith
- Bollywood Laughter Yoga Dance
- U3a Yoga Network: New Leaders' Workshops

**NATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

Enter your poetry and short stories in the competitions, submit your paintings/drawings and photographs to be featured in the online galleries. See what other members across the country have already submitted and see if you can spot anything from our Isle of Sheppey u3a members. Take part or just browse other members' submissions. Get involved by clicking here: [u3a National Programmes](#)

**Enter Your Photography & Art**

- Paint or Draw – New theme each month
- u3a Eye – Themed Photography Project
- Found in Nature – Photo Gallery of all things weird and wonderful in nature

**Writing Competitions**

Essay Competition 2025 – Competition now closed  
Read the winning entries on the u3a website

**Share Your Memories**

- Photos of World War II War Memorials

**Puzzles & Games**

- Logic Puzzles
- Maths Challenge
- Aileen's Game
- Where Am I?
- The u3a Quiz Library

**Connect with Members**

- u3a Air Fryer Community
- u3a Walkers' Exchange
- Find a u3a Speaker

**u3a SOURCES**

Read the u3a blog dedicated to sharing, inspiring and learning. Interesting and thought-provoking articles from around the country, giving insights into other u3as doing what all u3as do best ‘Learn, Laugh, Live’. Find the blog on the national website, click here: [u3a Sources](#)

**NATIONAL u3a – RADIO PODCAST**

Have you listened to the latest monthly **u3a Radio podcasts** on YouTube? On the 17<sup>th</sup> of each month a new episode is uploaded. Click here for the latest edition as well as the full list of radio podcasts since they started: [u3a Radio Podcast Playlist](#)



**u3a FRIENDS EXTRA**

u3a friends is a community open to all our u3a members. As part of this community our members have access to a wide range of offers, discounts and additional services. Friends can make savings on well-known brands, shopping, travel, day out and much more. Find out more here: [u3a Friends Extra Presentation](#)

**u3a FRIENDS - NEWSLETTER**

Sign up to get the most up to date news from National Office and find out the latest news and learning events as they are added. You will also get a link to the FRIENDS EXTRA benefits website.

Click here to find out more about what there is on offer nationally [National u3a](#). New events added monthly so, have a look and see if there’s anything interesting that you’d like to join with in the next few weeks.

**A LITTLE LIGHT ENTERTAINMENT**



**ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY – 28<sup>th</sup> August**

**1906** The birth of Sir John Betjemen, poet, broadcaster, a founding member of the Victorian Society and a passionate defender of Victorian architecture. Starting his career as a journalist, he ended it as one of the most popular British Poets Laureate to date and a much loved figure on British Television.

**1994** Thousands of shops throughout England and Wales opened legally for the first time on a Sunday, following changes to the Sunday trading laws.

**2003** An electricity blackout cut off power to around 50,000 people living in South East England and brought 60% of London’s underground rail network to a halt.

## Information & Contact Details

You can contact us here:

[Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com)

Find our website here:

<https://isle-of-sheppey.u3asite.uk/>

Our Facebook Page is:

<https://www.facebook.com/isleofsheppeyu3a>

Our members only Facebook Group is:

[Members Only Facebook Group](#)

Email us to join our WhatsApp Group:

[Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com](mailto:Isleofsheppeyu3a@gmail.com)

Interact with u3a members around the country:

[u3a:Keeping in Touch Facebook Group](#)

[Kent u3a Network Website](#)

[Kent u3a Network Facebook Group](#)

## Diversity & Inclusion Statement

Isle of Sheppey u3a recognises that everyone is different and aims to create an environment that values and treats all members fairly. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity and to ensure that u3a membership is as accessible as possible to different groups within the community.